

REMARKS

Claims 1, 4-15 and 16 are pending (claim 16 being added, and claims 2 and 3 being cancelled by this amendment).

In the aforesaid final Office action, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 2, and 10-15 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Gonzales et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,863,757), and claims 7 and 9 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gonzales et al., and objected to claims 3-6 and 8 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim.

Applicants have amended claims 1 and 13 to include all the limitations of allowable claim 3, and have added new claim 16 corresponding to allowable claim 8.

The Examiner objected to the drawings under 37 C.F.R. 1.83(a), as failing to show every feature specified in the claims. Submitted herewith is a Replacement Sheet of drawings including new Fig. 3A illustrating the tube comprising an outer layer of a first polymer and an inner layer of a second polymer extending along the length of the tubular layer. Support for new Fig. 3A can be found at the paragraph at page 12, line 25, originally disclosing:

“In the illustrated embodiment, the tube 14 is a single layered tube. However, in alternative embodiments, the tube 14 has two or more layers of different polymeric materials (not shown). For example, in one embodiment, tube 14 has an outer layer of a first polymer, and an inner layer extending at least along the length of the polymeric tubular layer and formed of a second polymer having a higher coefficient of friction than the outer layer. Thus, the second (inner layer) polymer enhances the frictional attachment of the tube 14 to the polymeric tubular layer 11. The nature of the first (outer layer) polymer is typically chosen to provide other required characteristics such as a high resistance in the axial direction, to thereby provide the multilayered tube 14 with the desired high compressing force/elastic energy in the axial direction during retraction from

the stretched configuration. The second (inner layer) polymer can extend the entire length of the tube 14, or preferably extends only along the length of the polymeric tubular layer 11, so that it does not extend along exposed sections of the mandrel 19 at either end of the polymeric tubular layer 11, to thereby minimize frictional forces between the tube 14 and the mandrel along which it must slide during stretching and retraction.”

Applicants have amended the specification to refer to new Fig. 3A.

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration, and issuance of a timely Notice of Allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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